

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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PRIZE NOVELIST JOHN T. MCINTYRE RISES TO DEFENSE OF POT-BOILERS

But Local Author Adds—
Don't Just Write for Money

By Jean Barrett

October 8, 1939.

If you want to be "in the chips"—don't write books!

That is the advice of John T. McIntyre, incurable Philadelphian, who didn't get through grammar school, but who managed to write "Steps Going Down," the American winner in the All-Nations Prize Novel Contest of three years ago.

Sincere writing, McIntyre believes, is not a money making proposition; but if one has to write, there's nothing to do save go to the mat with pad and pencil.

McIntyre himself started to write at the age of 20. For 11 years life was one rejection slip after another, until he clicked with a novel which, he says, was fittingly called "The Ragged Edge."

Always prolific, he turned out reams of copy during the next decade, love stories, detective yarns, "Westerns," and finally "struck gold" when he was commissioned to write "meller-drammers" for a stock company then packing 'em in at the old Standard Theater on South St.

"I wrote them by the armload," he said. "I'd grind out a whole act in an afternoon—and I guaranteed a new play each week. And the money was excellent."

On 'Pot-Boilers.'

But the man who captured a national prize in 1936 and followed that with "Ferment" in 1937, cast no aspersions upon "pot-boilers" for the struggling artist.

"If you know a thing is terrible," he declared, "you are in no danger of spoiling a sincere style. I've often heard painters declare they're afraid to do commercial work because it will give them mannerisms. That's a lot of hooey. If you've got something worthwhile, shelving it temporarily will never hurt it."

"The only danger lies in making money out of terrible writing. The fact that it is profitable might make you think it's good, and that's literary suicide."

McIntyre was born in Kensington, and except for short trips has never left his home town.

"I can't help it," he said. "I like the place. I know it. I know the people. I've lived with them and they are part of me. I've tried to get away. I hate the summer. It's so damned hot. I take my books and I go to the country. But first thing you know, I'm back in the heat, suffering and sweating—but I like it."

McIntyre lives alone in a bookfilled apartment at 257 S. 17th St. He gets up at dawn, stretches for an hour, and starts to write at 8. Every day. By noon, he says, he's about "written out." Then he reads. His taste is catholic and when in doubt he can always pick up a volume of Dickens.

He doesn't like to talk about his boyhood days except to admit he was

"to hard to manage" for any school teacher.

Until a few years ago McIntyre was an avid sport fan. But of late, he complains, the "streamliners" have ruined his fun.

'World Gone Wrong.'

"I never go to prizefights anymore," he said. "None of the present crop knows how to fight. Baseball isn't a contest now—it's an exhibition, something like wrestling. Home runs today are a nickle a dozen. They're ruined a great game."

Life now, he says, is bounded by books—books he writes and books he reads. He insists he is through with writing plays.

McIntyre recalls that his one contribution to Cupid was "A Young Man's Fancy," which he wrote back in 1919 with Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne cast for the stellar roles. Lynn met Alfred at the first rehearsal. They fell in love and were married the next season.

McIntyre has just finished a serial and has a comedy he's itching to put on paper. And there's the nucleus of a serious book buzzing in the subconscious.

OPIE READ DEAD;

NOTED FOR WIT

Last of Pioneer Literary Line,
He Wrote More Than 50 Books

CHICAGO, Nov. 2, 1939 (AP).—Opie Read, last of a pioneer American literary line that included Mark Twain, Eugene Field and James Whitcomb Riley, died today of infirmities induced by September's extreme heat.

He would have been eighty-seven December 22. He was particularly noted for his wit.

Stories Widely Read

Opie Read was still in his thirties when critics began to call him the foremost delineator of Southern character. Back in the eighties whenever newspapers were read, the stories of Opie Read were familiar as melodies remembered from a plantation boyhood, folktales of the Tennessee hills and quaint dinky stories flowed from his heart and his pen. Editors throughout the country quoted odd bits from his "Arkansas Traveler."

Born in Nashville, Tenn., December 22, 1852, Read was one of ten children. After working his way through Neophogen College, he became a newspaper man and edited the Little Rock Gazette and the Cleveland Leader. In 1887, with the Arkansas Traveler firmly established as a national publication, he moved it to Chicago.

Noted for Ready Wit

In the course of his long career, Read was intimately associated with scores of literary and other celebrities who delighted in his inexhaustible flow of wit. "An ardent golfer, he originated many years ago a gag still heard occasionally, 'He's a Civil War golfer—out in '61, back in '65.'"

Wearing a broadcloth suit and a black tie, and looking the part of a Southern statesman of the old school, Read was a familiar figure around Chicago for more than half a century. There two years ago he was cut off the air during a luncheon address because the radio station broadcasting it considered a story he was telling too spicy.

Read was the author of "The Jucklins," "A Kentucky Colonel," "A Tennessee Judge," "Wives of the Prophet," "Old Ebenezer" and some fifty other books.

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